

WATERTOWN HOUSING PARTNERSHIP Meeting Minutes

**Tuesday, March 29, 2011 at 6:00 pm
3rd Floor Conference Room**

Attendees:

David Leon, Chair
Fred Reynolds, Member
Alex Liazos, Member
Paul Menton, Member
Torey Dean, Member
Danielle Evans, Senior Planner, DCDP
Gideon Schreiber, Senior Planner, DCDP
Jennifer Van Campen, Executive Director, Watertown Community Housing, Inc.
Heather Boujoulian, Vice President, Criterion Development Partners
Karnig Ostayan, Bell Tower Place
Dani Chedid, Bell Tower Place

I. Approval of Minutes

The Paul Menton made a motion to approve the minutes from the September, October, and November meetings. Torey Dean seconded the motion. The motion passed 5-0.

II. 270 Pleasant Street

Heather Boujoulian, Vice President, Criterion Development Partners, presented the plans for the 17 affordable units to be included at the 270 Pleasant Street apartment project. She explained that 14 of the units would be in the large building and 3 units would be in the small building. Goal is to have the project fully occupied by summer 2012.

There was discussion regarding whether the units could be floating rather than fixed. Heather was going to check how that was handled in their recent project in Bedford. Jennifer Van Campen offered to check with DHCD to see what would be allowed under the Local Initiative Program.

The Housing Partnership discussed the proposal. Alex Liazos made a motion to approve (pending final review) Criterion's proposal to meet the affordable housing criteria of the WZO. Fred Reynolds seconded the motion. The motion passed 5-0.

III. Bell Tower Place

Karnig and Dani, the developers of Bell Tower Place, updated the WHP on the current status of Bell Tower Place. Of the 12 units, they have sold 7. The most recent amendment to the AHA calls for provision of the off-site affordable unit after sale of the

7th unit. They now would like to request that this requirement be postponed further to after the sale of the 8th unit.

Karnig presented their proposal to provide a family-size four bedroom condominium unit at 72 Nichols St. He originally bought the property in 2007 in order to assist the Armenian community, which did not end up needing it. Karnig stated that he never brought up this particular unit before because he wasn't certain that they didn't need it until recently. Currently the building houses two units on two levels which he proposes to combine. There is also a commercial/warehouse use in the building.

Alex Liazos asked whether the Town needs a 4-bedroom condo.

David Leon questioned the appropriateness of the location due to the surrounding uses.

Karnig responded that Bell Tower Place is also surrounded by a mix of uses. Both developments are close to bus lines.

Jennifer Van Campen stated that her recent experience has shown that there is no movement in the buying of affordable units. The State is also not putting any money into home ownership programs. She suggested that a cash-in lieu option might be the preferred option.

The WHP discussed the merits of the request to amend the AHA to further postpone the provision of the off-site affordable units. Paul Mention made a motion to amend the AHA to require the provision of the off-site units prior to issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy for the 9th unit. Fred Reynold seconded the motion. The motion passed 3-0.

The WHP did not vote on whether to accept the proposed unit. They would like to explore alternative options to providing ownership units, such as cash-in-lieu of units or a rental scenario.

IV. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 8:00 pm.